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Executive Order
66-13735

25 August 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : PFIAB Knox Panel

1. This is for your information, and relates to your luncheon engagement Friday, 26 August, with William T. Knox, Chairman, Guidance & Evaluation Panel, President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board.

2. The Knox Panel was organized last fall pursuant to Presidential direction given a year ago. Its mission is:

- a. To provide guidance to the intelligence community in the forwarding of methods and facilities for information handling and access; and,
- b. To evaluate in technical terms the true meaning of the enormous and somewhat heterogeneous growth of the intelligence community's information pool.

3. Mr. Knox is a scientist on leave from Esso Research. He has done considerable work in the field of S&T information handling. As a member of Dr. Hornig's staff, he has also served as Chairman, Committee on Scientific and Technical Information. He presumably will return to Esso or to other employment in November, when he hopes to have completed the report on intelligence.

4. Mr. Knox's associates on the Panel are a distinguished group in various academic pursuits. They have organized themselves into various Sub-panels to cover special aspects of intelligence community activity (see TAB A for Panel membership and Sub-panel assignments).

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5. Over the last eight months the Panel as a whole, its Sub-panels, or individual Panel members, have been extensively briefed by and have visited widely in the intelligence community. Meetings of the Panel were scheduled for about three days each month.

6. The entire effort may be characterized as an attempt by a group of well-motivated, intellectually impressive, broadly-experienced, very busy individuals to come to grips by occasional encounters with the toughest problem which the community has. The glue keeping the show going has been Mr. Knox, part-time, and Mr. Thomas McFee, Executive Secretary, also part-time, but primarily on this problem.

7. We put forward our best people when called upon. We have invariably responded promptly and fully.

8. For all our contacts with these gentlemen, however, we know remarkably little what they are likely to come up with as a final report. Time and again, after a meeting, our people would call me and ask what these people really were after.

9. Such clues as we have would, I believe, support these general observations:

- . Members of the Panel have been somewhat frustrated in trying to decide what they could do to be helpful, and have been of several minds about what is most critical.
- . The Panel has been impressed by the caliber of people already at work on our information handling problem, and is likely to applaud much of the work underway (e.g., CHIVE, WALNUT, NPIC's program, NIE and NIS production arrangements).
- . The Panel will probably not feel it can make specific recommendations as to techniques, or even, as it was called upon to do, to evaluate in technical terms the true meaning of the growth of information.

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- . The Panel has undoubtedly concluded that management effort behind attempts to deal with information problems is insufficient, and that organizational arrangements for running the community effort in this field are unsatisfactory.

10. In short, the thrust of the report is likely to be away from the technical and toward the managerial aspects of how well or badly USIB and its subcommittee structure (principally the Committee on Documentation) come to grips with information handling problems. The Panel was much impressed by the SCIPS Report (produced by CODIB in 1964: USIB-D-39.7/5). It has been disappointed by (a) USIB's response thereto, and (b) CODIB's progress in forging information processing components of the community into a rational, well-integrated system.

11. In my view, this is based upon the false premise that the intelligence community is like a well-integrated corporation whose chairman of the board, the DCI, is also major stockholder. In fact, in the information processing field at least, we more closely resemble the trade association.

12. The one bit of hard evidence we have on these points is a preliminary draft of the report of the Sub-panel on Biographics. Mr. Knox maintains this was mistakenly released to us. Dr. Oettinger, who heads this Sub-panel, did send it over and in fact wrote a letter (which we were later told to disregard) requesting comment. The tenor of this draft is characterized by the introductory paragraph of the major findings:

The major finding of this subpanel is that the main thing preventing an immediate intelligent community-wide attack on information problems in the biographics area is a combination of inability and unwillingness of the intelligence community, as presently structured and operated, to pay more than lip service to the idea of concerted effort. It is the so-called "realities" of organizational politics, not any basic technical

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obstacles, that spawn apparent impossibilities at every step of the way. No serious technical obstacle is visible on the way toward automation in the biographics area. We do not doubt that technical problems will appear further on, but the way is clear enough to set out on the journey at once.

25X1 13. This tone has also been reflected orally from time to time. For example, [] recently had a discussion with Mr. McFee on the status of the work of the Current Intelligence Sub-panel. McFee implied that its report would downplay the applicability of technology to current intelligence production, but would emphasize duplication and the chaotic aspects of the administrative structure, saying that "There must be a better way for the community to organize itself."

14. Having told you the worst, let me say that Mr. Knox will be very cautious about putting anything in the final report that is likely to reflect adversely on the Panel or be embarrassing to you. He and the others want to help. The result in any event will be to stimulate increased management awareness of the need for continuing policy guidance, and to stress the need for more interplay between users and operators of information systems. If you can tell him during lunch what you would find helpful, he will if at all possible respond.

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Director of Intelligence Support

Attachment: a/s

cc: D/DCI/NIPE
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